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Editorial Comment

WITH this first number of volume IV the *Journal* goes into the hands of a new editorial board. Though launched at a moment when the disorganizing effect of the Great War was becoming more and more evident, the *Journal* went steadily and vigorously on under the direction of the first Managing Editor. Many of its subscribers and contributors were drawn into the national service in various ways; an important part of the editorial board, including the Managing Editor, donned uniforms in response to the appeal of patriotism and conviction. A natural and well-merited reaction in the United States against the political and military policy of the German Empire reached a regrettable extreme in the attitude of state legislatures, of school boards and of school administrative officers toward the teaching of the German language and literature. In not a few states it has been almost totally suppressed, and many of the teachers of the subject have been forced into other branches or have left the profession entirely. The founding of a vigorous periodical devoted entirely to the rapidly growing cohort of teachers of Spanish has also operated to diminish somewhat the subscription list of the *Journal*. It is very encouraging, therefore, to learn that there were more than 2400 subscribers to volume III, despite the causes operating to cut down its circulation. The magazine has justified the hopes and the confidence of the teachers who worked to establish it, and who pledged themselves to make good the monetary deficit which every one looked for in the first year. That this deficit has never existed is due to the ability and zeal of the first Business Manager, though the cost of manufacture has increased from year to year.

Thus the *Journal* comes into the hands of the new board a solvent, going concern. We cannot promise to advance as far from our starting point as our predecessors have done from theirs; we can only hope that the new administration will keep the ground already won, in the face of really great difficulties, and will push forward into new territory.

In the present state of affairs it will not be surprising if it turns out that most of the contributions to Volume IV bear on the Romance field. Mr. Krause remarks, in the conclusions to his bibliography of methodology, that articles on teaching German are diminishing in number. This tendency is sure to become more marked, and should create no surprise if it is manifested in the pages of the *Journal*, which is, after all, dependent on the teaching public for contributions. Naturally the board does not announce a policy of discouraging such articles, but it is safe to predict that they will be less numerous in the immediate future than in recent years. Its policy will, of course, be as in the past, to invite contributions from all teachers of foreign modern languages, in the conviction that there is room in American schools for all the modern languages through which great minds have spoken and are speaking to the world, and need of them as avenues of approach to educating and civilizing influences, as well to scientific, technical, and commercial effectiveness.

The Executive Committee is strongly of the opinion that the department of Notes and News should be expanded. Heretofore it has contained chiefly reports of meetings of regional associations, despite the appeals of the editors for other types of new items. Here, as in most other departments, the editors are dependent on the public. The new board pleads vigorously for help in this direction. It urges the readers of the *Journal* all over the country to send in for this department items of a personal, local, and general character. The readers of the *Journal* will be interested to have brief notes concerning movements or changes in any school system or individual schools and colleges, in the personnel, in the in the drift of interest toward a particular subject, in matters of policy, new or old. There is surely some one in every state who is somewhat in the center of modern language activities; who knows all the most capable teachers and their work; who attends most of the local and regional meetings and gossips with his or her fellows; who is, in short, in contact with almost everything, personal and professional, in the field of the *Journal*. We invite communications from such persons. We wish to appoint very soon a correspondent in every state. We are determined to increase the space devoted to "Notes and News," for if we do not, the

Committee warns us that we are in danger of losing our newly acquired editorial head with all its accompanying emoluments and privileges.

The present board hopes to develop further features in the bibliographical section of the *Journal*. All the editors will contribute to this, but Mr. T. E. Oliver will be primarily responsible. We expect to continue the department of reviews and notices of new publications. Readers interested in reviewing Spanish books will communicate with Mr. Joel Hatheway; Messrs. Oliver and Downer will be glad to find capable reviewers of French grammars and reading texts respectively; Miss Whitney will look after the reviews of German reading texts; Mr. Purin of German grammars and of general methodology.

The editors would like more articles of what may be called a "cultural" nature; studies of reading texts, showing what they contain of the history, the geography, the customs, the thought, the mental attitude of a people; articles on literary or social movements that will throw light on material studied in the high school and in the introductory years in college. There is need too for practical but sound discussions of questions of language and idiom. Many grammar questions, and some fairly elementary ones, trouble teachers and students alike. Most of them are well treated in reference books, but these do not often enough come into the hands of less fortunately placed teachers. Some of the current articles on teaching pronunciation furnish a case in point, and there are many questions of syntax and idiom that might be as profitably discussed in the pages of the *Journal*.

Volume IV will cost considerably more to manufacture than its predecessors and the board will be obliged to feel its way, in the first issues at least, until the new Business Manager can see his way clearly. The numbers will be kept down approximately to 48 pages, and contributors are requested to keep out of their articles all material—diagrams, cuts, tables and lists, text in a foreign language—entailing extra expense for setting up, unless it is *really essential* to the content of the article. The issues will increase in size as rapidly as the *Journal's* income permits.

It is clear that the incoming editors plan nothing revolutionary. They are grateful for the successful labors of their predecessors. They are aware that they must indeed give generously of their energy and intelligence if their administration is to be one of growth. It is their ambition to preserve the representative character of the *Journal* as the expression of modern language teaching in America. To do this they must make modifications as teaching conditions change. That is only natural. But the solid structure has been erected. The editors plead only that they may be aided in making it larger and worthier of a cause of growing importance.